

TRAINING NOTES



Pre-Ranger Training

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article was prepared by the staff of the Ranger Training Brigade. It is the second in a three-part series designed to prepare Ranger candidates to meet the Ranger Course's challenges. The third article in the series is presented as the Commandant's Note in this issue. In it, the Commandant of the Infantry School discusses certain changes that will be made in the Ranger Course during the coming fiscal year.

As the Commandant of the Infantry School has said earlier in this issue, the Ranger Course conducted by the School's Ranger Training Brigade is the Army's premier leadership course. The soldiers who graduate from it are hardened, competent, small unit leaders who are confident they can lead units into combat and overcome all obstacles to accomplish their mission.

Pre-Ranger training helps prepare future Ranger Course students for the physical and mental rigors of the U.S. Army Ranger School. Throughout the Army, many units dedicate resources to prepare their soldiers for this excellent leadership training experience. However, modern course design, continued high attrition, increased enrollment, and decreasing budgets mandate that the Infantry School and the sending units work together to select and prepare

soldiers who are fully prepared for Ranger School. Selection and preparation are the keys to success, especially when considering that course enrollment since the mid-1980s has increased 47 percent while the number of course graduates has increased only 26 percent.

COMPARISON

The impact of supervised Ranger student preparation can be measured partially by a comparison of enrollment and graduation rates. Those students with pre-Ranger training have had a 13 percent higher enrollment rate (meeting medical, administrative, PT, and swim test requirements) and an additional 13 percent higher graduation rate than those who declared they had had no preparatory training. Most noticeably, students who attend pre-Ranger training have a much lower medical attrition rate. (For additional attrition information, see "The Ranger Course," *INFANTRY*, May-June 1991, pages 37-39.)

The Ranger Training Brigade during any given year welcomes more than 3,000 Ranger candidates. Unfortunately, more than one-third of those soldiers do not successfully complete the Course's graduation requirements. (See "The Ranger Course," *INFANTRY*, May-June 1991, pages 37-39.)

Concepts for pre-Ranger training

vary by type of unit and varying command emphasis or guidance. All sending units, including officer basic and advanced courses, can reduce their Ranger student attrition rates by conducting tailored pre-Ranger training and preparation. The Infantry Officer Basic Course (IOBC) provides prerequisite training in its program of instruction; however, physical fitness and swim test validation, and additional foot marching and land navigation training are highly recommended. Other OBCs and OACs should tailor their supplemental training as required. These officer courses may consider designating either school cadre or student OICs to conduct and evaluate training.

TOE unit concepts also vary significantly. All major field prescribers currently conduct pre-Ranger programs. The vast majority of these are centralized at division or regimental (75th Ranger Regiment) level, although some decentralize their pre-Ranger training to brigade or even battalion level. In general, those units that do not require commander and senior NCO supervision of Ranger student preparation suffer higher attrition than the class average.

Due to changes in the Ranger Course, some preparation adjustments are necessary to ensure that Ranger candidates are competitive upon their arrival at Ranger School. Two critical changes are:

• The Ranger Assessment Phase (RAP), which was effective with Class 11-91 (26 July 1991), evaluates individual skills and test requirements that are essential for successful course completion. During the first four days, RAP evaluates the skills shown in Figure 1 and should both *confirm and reinforce the student's mental resolve* to graduate from the course.

• A revised prerequisite skills list (Figure 2), requires unit commander certification. These skills will be reflected in FY1992 revisions to DA Pamphlet 351-4, *The Army Formal Schools Catalog*, and in new editions of SH 21-75, *The Ranger Course Pamphlet*.

Both of these changes are especially important to all pre-Ranger training programs. Pre-Ranger training should *objectively certify* future Ranger stu-

dents on the prerequisite skills and on all RAP tasks, while *subjectively confirming the mental resolve* to overcome course challenges. Current pre-Ranger programs in TOE units vary in duration from 11 to 21 days. Two weeks is sufficient time to test and train prospective candidates on the abilities necessary to start the course. An example two-week POI outline is at Figure 3. As a suggested minimum, units should pre-test students on RAP tasks and conduct a 72-hour field training exercise (FTX) to assess their mental toughness as well as their tactical leadership proficiency.

To further focus their pre-Ranger training programs, the following recommendations are provided:

• Ensure that each candidate receives a complete physical examination by a medical doctor before starting pre-

Ranger training. (Each candidate must have a current physical in his file when he reports for the Ranger Course at Fort Benning.)

• Provide each candidate a copy of SH 21-75 and ensure that each knows and understands its contents and complies with equipment requirements.

• Establish a rigorous physical training program aimed at meeting or exceeding the RAP standards. This program should increase the soldiers' confidence and help overcome anxiety when they are evaluated on their physical skills during the RAP.

• Develop the candidates' land navigation skills on as wide a variety of navigation courses as possible, and include a number of map and compass exercises to build their individual proficiency and confidence.

• Evaluate potential Ranger Course

RANGER ASSESSMENT PHASE	
<p>DAY 1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Army Physical Fitness Test: 52 push-ups, 62 sit-ups, two-mile run in running shoes (14:54 or less), and 6 chin-ups 2. Combat Water Survival Test (CWST): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. 15-meter swim: with rifle, wearing BDUs, boots, and load carrying equipment (LCE) (pistol belt, suspenders, two ammunition pouches, and two full canteens) b. Three-meter drop: Walk blindfolded off a three-meter high diving board with LCE, enter the water, remove blindfold, swim to poolside. c. Equipment removal: wearing BDUs, boots, and LCE and carrying rifle. Enter water from poolside, submerge, discard rifle and LCE, surface, and swim to poolside. <p>DAY 2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Five-mile run in running shoes, eight minutes per mile. 2. Eight-mile footmarch, 15 minutes per mile, with a 35-pound rucksack, LCE, and helmet. <p>DAY 3</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Daylight compass course. 2. Night compass course. <p>DAY 4</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ranger Stakes consisting of 10 of the following 13 tasks: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Maintain an M60 Machinegun. (071-312-3025, STP 7-11B, Page 3-270) b. Load an M60 Machinegun. (071-312-3027, STP 21-1-SMCT, Page 251) c. Prepare a Range Card for an M60 Machinegun. (071-312-3007, STP 7-11B, Page 3-260) d. Perform Operator Maintenance on an M249 Machinegun (SAW). (071-312-4025, STP 7-11B, Page 3-130) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> e. Operate an M249 Machinegun. (071-312-4027, STP 7-11B, Page 3-151) f. Employ an M16A1 Claymore Mine. (071-325-4425, STP 21-1-SMCT, Page 317) g. Send a Radio Message. (113-571-1016, STP 21-1-SMCT, Page 47) h. Encode and Decode Messages Using KTC 600 Tactical Operations Code. (113-573-4003, STP 7-11B, Page 3-454) i. Maintain an M16A1 or M16A2 Rifle. (071-311-2025, STP 21-1-SMCT, Page 110) j. Correct Malfunctions on an M16 Rifle. (071-311-2029, STP 21-1-SMCT, Page 152) k. Perform a Functions Check on an M16A1 or M16A2 Rifle. (071-311-2026, STP 21-1-SMCT, Page 135) l. Employ Hand Grenades. (071-325-4407, STP 21-1-SMCT, Page 304) m. Maintain an M203 Grenade Launcher. (071-311-2125, STP 7-11B, Page 3-192) <p>*These tasks will not be tested at least until the second quarter FY 92 due to nonavailability of SAW.</p> <p>Note: SAWs will be maintained at RTB for those individuals who do not have access to SAWs for the hands-on portion of training before RAP testing.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Students must receive a "GO" on seven of the ten tasks; one retest is allowed per failed task. 3. Retests for day and night land navigation will also be administered on Day 4.

Figure 1

PREREQUISITE TASKS

1. Call for and Adjust Indirect Fire.
(061-283-6003; STP 21-24-SMCT, Page 55)
2. Camouflage Yourself and Your Individual Equipment.
(051-191-1361; STP 21-1-SMCT, Page 393)
3. Use KTC 1400 Numerical Cipher/Authentication System.
(113-573-4006; STP 7-11B, Page 3-457)
4. Navigate From One Point on the Ground to Another Point While Dismounted.
(071-329-1006; STP 21-24-SMCT, Page 21)
5. Determine the Grid Coordinates of a Point on a Military Map.
(071-329-1002; STP 21-1-SMCT, Page 76)
6. Determine a Magnetic Azimuth Using a Lensatic Compass.
(071-329-1003; STP 21-1-SMCT, Page 90)
7. Determine the Elevation of a Point on the Ground Using a Map.
(071-329-1004; STP 21-24-SMCT, Page 36)
8. Determine a Location on the Ground by Terrain Association.
(071-329-1005; STP 21-1-SMCT, Page 87)
9. Measure Distance on a Map.
(071-329-1008; STP 21-1-SMCT, Page 105)
10. Convert Azimuths.
(071-329-1009; STP 21-24-SMCT, Page 28)
11. Determine Azimuth Using a Protractor.
(071-510-0001; STP 21-24-SMCT, Page 45)
12. Orient a Map Using a Lensatic Compass.
(071-329-1011; STP 21-24-SMCT, Page 30)
13. Orient a Map to the Ground by Map Terrain Association.
(071-329-1012; STP 21-1-SMCT, Page 72)
14. Locate an Unknown Point on a Map and on the Ground by Intersection.
(071-329-1014; STP 21-24-SMCT, Page 39)
15. Locate an Unknown Point on a Map and on the Ground by Resection.
(071-329-1015; STP 21-24-SMCT, Page 42)
16. Prime Explosives Non-electrically.
(051-193-1003; STP 7-11B, Page 3-480)
17. Clear a Misfire.
(051-193-2030; STP 7-11B, Page 3-488)
18. Practice Preventive Medicine.
(081-831-1043; STP 21-1-SMCT, Page 338)
19. Prepare an M136 Launcher for Firing (AT4).
(071-054-0001; STP 21-1-SMCT, Page 199)
20. Operate Night Vision Goggles AN/PVS-5.
(071-315-0030; STP 7-11B, Page 3-340)

Figure 2

SAMPLE PRE-RANGER POI

ADMINISTRATIVE

- In-processing/out-processing
- Supply issue/turn-in
- Briefings
- Medical brief/safety

PHYSICAL TRAINING/CONFIDENCE

- APFT
- CWST
- Physical training (including five-mile run, 8-12 mile footmarch)

INDIVIDUAL TRAINING

- Communications
- Fire support
- Medical (self/buddy aid)
- Troop leading procedures IAW FM 7-8
- Weapons proficiency
- Platoon leader, platoon sergeant, team leader responsibilities

LAND NAVIGATION

- Diagnostic map test
- Map reading/route selection
- Day course (practice)
- Night course (practice)
- Day and night course (graded) with required retests

6-DAY FTX

- Ambush, raids, recons, MTCs, OPORDs, warning orders

PATROLLING TECHNIQUES

- Patrolling diagnostic test
- Introduction to patrolling
- Warning order
- Operations order
- Departure/reentry FFU
- Patrol base activities
- Link-up operations
- Coordinations
- Reconnaissance
- Ambush/raids
- FTXs

***NOTE:** These techniques will be taught extensively in Ranger school but are recommended pre-Ranger training subjects for non-infantry students or for individuals who have not yet served in TOE unit leadership positions.

Figure 3

students' desire and commitment by subjecting them to stressful tactical situations in the conduct of reconnaissance, raid, and ambush missions. For example, the students may be allowed little food and sleep, within the limits dictated by safety concerns and common sense, and should be required to apply fieldcraft to protect themselves and their equipment.

- Identify candidates for the Ranger Course through chain of command observation and selection, intensive training, and continuous evaluation.

Units should be careful, though, not to burn these soldiers out before sending them off to Benning. In fact, depending upon the stress and length of the unit courses, soldiers should be given at least 10 days to recover from the effects of their pre-Ranger training program.

- Allow candidates to attend summer course Zero Week training at Fort Benning to become acclimatized for hot weather challenges.

Pre-Ranger programs assist the chain of command in the selection and preparatory training of future Ranger

students. Statistics show that students entering the Ranger Course with a pre-Ranger Course background perform better, have significantly fewer disqualifying injuries, and have a much lower attrition rate. A good pre-Ranger training program can give the needed edge to a soldier in his quest for the coveted black-and-gold Ranger tab.

